

AMONG THE DELLS.



B. H. STANDISH.



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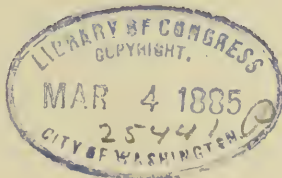
FROM THE C., M. & ST. P. RY CO.

AMONG THE DELLS.

AMONG THE DELLS.

A POEM.

382
✓
By B. H. STANDISH.



MADISON, WIS.:

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PREFACE.

THE DELLS of the Wisconsin river are known as one of the attractive summer resorts of the Northwest. They are about five miles in length, and are formed by the converging of the river's banks, through which the broad expanse of water above is forced with great rapidity. If we wish to know how long the river has been in making its present bed, or what caused it to take this course, we are left to conjecture. Above the Dells the bluffs show water-marks many feet higher than the present surface of the river. This, of course, would indicate that the adjacent flats which lie below these marks were once submerged. Perhaps the outlet of this lagoon was over what now are termed the bluffs; and more than one outlet is probable. The worn surface of the river banks shows that these bluffs are full of seams. Now, all river water is originally rain water, and all rain water contains some carbonic acid abstracted from the air. Decaying vegetable growth adds the same acid to water. The waters of the Wisconsin river are noted for the amount of vegetable growth contained. A glass of it held up to the sun shows scores of fragments of vegetable origin. Now, by the time the water left the lagoon to traverse this long run, it must have been

heavily charged with carbonic acid. This acid rapidly decomposed the rocks, widening and deepening the channel until it drained the lake, the bottom of which forms the flats above the Dells. If these conjectures are correct, they show that the river has not been as long in making its present bed as some have supposed.

Kilbourn City is headquarters for tourists. The places of accommodation for such are often crowded, and in time new ones will, doubtless, be erected. Aside from hotel guests there are many who bring tents, and camp out. This does well if you have good company, and it has the advantage of sure quarters. We took this kind of quarters, and pitched our tent the first night on the green above the rapids, whose constant roar made a stern lullaby that brought us sleep.

Morning came, promising a fair day, and kept its promise. As the steamers usually stop at but two points up the river, we thought best to take a row-boat and, at our leisure, select a good camping-ground. Most men make mistakes and truly we made one this time. The first mile was pleasant. The air cool and bracing; the scenery entertaining. At the beginning of the second, we concluded to keep to the right-hand bank, out of the rays of the sun as much as possible. At the end of the third, all novelty of the situation had passed away. We had not reached an ideal camping-ground yet, so pulled on a mile farther, where we anchored on a sand bar, and sat down to count the blisters and think of the friends at home.

This was unsatisfying; so we climbed the bank and gathered winter-greens to send at the first opportunity to those we had determined not to think of more. Hailing a passing boat we asked how far it was to the first landing. The answer came back, "Three-quarters of a mile, with some of the hardest rowing in the Dells." We consulted together, and determined to proceed, but after a desperate struggle gave it up and floated back to Cold Water Canon, there to await the up-coming steamer. By the time we had explored this place and gained a little rest, the steamer appeared. We signaled her to stop, but she, at first, kept her course. However, we succeeded in getting permission to come on board. This we did shortly, and received the sympathy of every man who had ever attempted the Dells in a row-boat; and the information that they could not be passed except under most favorable circumstances.

Reaching the upper landing, the company disembarked and moved away up Witches' Gulch. A few, however, remained to engage in a dance on the steamer's deck. This seemed delightful. Out beneath the universal tent, with a cool breeze coming up the river, wafting back the soft music of the harp accompanied by the sound of quick-moving feet; and, with all, the fair figures of maidens who appeared to move without exhaustion, made a bit of art in this wild nature not objectionable. We had forgotten our exhaustion, and were held by invisible hands. But the memory of early

instruction came back and we wended away up the gulch in the footsteps of those already gone. Here is the most celebrated scenery of the Dells. The gorge runs nearly at right angles to the river bed, and its high banks, covered with birch and pine, in places nearly hide the firmament. A wild stream dashes through it, and hangs up its veil of mist in the dark chambers.

This gulch needs a hotel. Fabulous prices, however, are demanded for a site and the right of way to the river below. But if one is ever built here, it will be a good place to spend a few hot summer days. Above this gulch, on the banks, in the shade of the pines, we pitched our tent. Here the many voices of the waters below came up to us, and the soft sighing of the pines could lull us to forgetfulness. From this camp we could explore the neighborhood at our leisure. Now up the river among the many islands; or inland to the great mounds.

Back from the river, about one mile, is a tree-clad eminence, conspicuous because of its superior height. To reach this we took a sandy wagon track which wound among the low pines and bushy oaks. It is a tiresome trip, but will pay the exertion. From its summit glimpses of the Wisconsin can be had, as it creeps down from the blue line of the horizon, now hiding behind ranges of hills, now sweeping around bluffs, and showing a stretch of water sparkling in the sun. Yonder rise the gray spires of Kilbourn City; and up comes the dull rumble of moving cars and the far whistle of river-steamers. On our

left, in the dim distance, made more dim by the hazy atmosphere, are outlined the bold bluffs of Baraboo. Near at hand we catch glimpses of farm houses, growing crops and cultivated fields. While away from our backs stretch pine barrens — the nesting place of countless numbers of pigeons, and the haunt of the wild deer. This is a fair prospect, but this hill-top has a dark cloud resting upon it. It was once the death-bed of a lone maid.

The Dells have some attractions for sportsmen as well as for sight-seers. In their season millions of pigeons pass here to their nesting ground beyond. At this time the cities send up their hunters and the surrounding country its netters; so the poor birds have a hard time of it. But they soon depart for their haunts in the unknown regions of the Northwest. Along the river, in the tall grasses and rank, woody growths, the deer makes his bed by day, and steals forth at night to his green pastures on the upland. The hunter lies in wait by the river bank, and strikes him as he returns from his nightly excursions. The eagerness with which he has been sought is fast driving him to the more secluded regions of the north. The fishing, too, is tolerable here. The stream above has been stocked with trout, and many pike and bass are taken from the river.

It takes several days to see all that there is of the Dells; and a longer time may be wiled away by the aid of gun, rod and botany glass. At the close of our time we were ready to fold our tent, and silently steal away. The trip

down the river was delightful. Again we had the choice of steamer and open boat, and unhesitatingly chose the latter. We knew that the current would do the work, and none would be there to intrude. So, when the sun was passing over the western hills, we glided out into the stream and began the descent. The current, which in high water is so furious that no boat can withstand it, was now comparatively docile. It bore us gracefully around projecting rocks, and safely over angry whirlpools; now out in mid-stream, where a merry laugh would set the echoes flying; now under the lofty banks, which were covered with goldenrod, asters, yarrow, water-horehound, and ferns of many varieties. Higher up are birch and pine, from whose boughs the departing songsters were flinging down a last good-night to a haunt they love so well.

The moments flew, and ere we were aware we glided by the last rocky height and arrived at the landing below. A glance at the watch showed that sixty minutes had dropped into oblivion since we turned our faces down the river. We paused here to cast a backward glance at these days, the principal events of which are reflected in the following pages, and which we look upon now as the most strange and romantic of our life.

B. H. STANDISH.

Evansville, Wis.

NOTE.

BY a special favor of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Company we are enabled to give the Frontispiece, and four other views of the Dells of the Wisconsin River.

By a like favor of the Milwaukee, Lake Shore and Western Railway Company we give three views of the upper Wisconsin River and vicinity.

AUTHOR.

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AMONG THE DELLS.

INTRODUCTION.

WITHIN the silent wilderness, beneath a summer noon,
Upon a grassy couch I lay, but half forgetful soon,
For half of life about was life, and half was in a swoon.
Beyond, the earth was seasonchecked; a hundred feet beneath
A little spring invisible was in a leafy sheath;
Above, a stately pine, by windy centuries unbent,
Appeared to stay the hollow arch of this beclouded tent;
And all the green-clad multitude, that clustered at its feet,
Were standing in the shimmer of a growing veil of heat.

It seemed delightful here to lie and lose the world of strife,
And find the heart of nature and behold its inner life,
To don the garment of the day, and, losing sight and sound,
To wallow in the silence that o'erran the world around;
And dream, yes be a dreamer of the days that long were dead,
And watch the dying present with the dead past quickly wed.
The ages, that had rolled and broke upon this stately tree,
Dropped glimpses of their history upon the grass to me;

I saw the relics of a race that chased an unknown game,
I saw their dusky conquerors, who in their triumph came
And pitched their tents within the wood, and held for many a
year

The far-stretched wilderness about, the haunt of wolf and deer,
And then the holy missionary, standing cross in hand,
Forerunner of a numerous race that soon possessed the land;
And cities glimmered back the light, where tents had lately
stood,
And checkered fields of growing grain were crowding back
the wood.

Now came the sudden consciousness of being not alone,
The noonday revery was done, the pleasant vision flown;
I turned, and lo! an aged man in silence waited near;
I marked his sorrowful array, and saw his want of cheer;
His garb was old and soiled and worn; he held a broken gun;
The buckle of his leathern belt, and buttons caught the sun;
His stubborn form was little bent beneath the drift of snow
That fell upon his shoulders broad, and on his bosom low.
He seemed to be a sentinel who pressed with noiseless feet
Upon a self-appointed task, and self-appointed beat;
And now and then he paused and peered within the gorge below,
And touched his fowling-piece at some imaginary foe;
But when I came, intent to learn of what he saw and feared,
He turned abruptly to the wood, and slowly disappeared.

What meant these strange maneuvers of this strange appearing
guest;

I thought to follow unobserved, and mark him at his best;
But vainly through the underwood I kept his winding trail,
In vain I climbed the rugged bluff, and wandered in the vale;
At last emerging from the wood upon a public way,
Below, inclosed by rocky hills, a little valley lay,
Through which, beneath the summer sun, appeared a silver
thread;

By willow clumps and spurs it wound, by unseen sources fed;
Some humble hamlets showed their gray and weather-beaten
forms,

The mosses gathered on the roofs had healed the wounds of
storms;

And one had clumps of hollyhocks, that grew beside a spring,
Among the basswood limbs above a child had gained a swing.

The hours went on and brought delight and reveries and rest,
And then I sought the lonely camp, where pines sighed o'er
their guest;

The day was going from the world; the clouds took purple
frills;

The sun was bearing down his web beyond the western hills;
The air was changing color, and long shafts of yellow light
Had spanned the darkened vale below, and touched the gloomy
hight;

Along the river mist arose, and o'er adjacent lands
A sheet of fogs unrolled to bleach, upheld by unseen hands;
Above the woods the nighthawks blared, and soared in noisy
 groups;
The swallows o'er their rocky caves were wheeling round in
 troops;
And in the leafy gorge to which the dragonfly had gone,
Was heard a distant whippoorwill in animated song;
The guiding bell, and low of cattle sounded from afar,
And in the windows of the sky was seen a single star.

The camp-fire climbed its cone of wood, and from its topmost
 hight
Flung out its crimson banner to the slowly falling night;
The aged pines, that stood above and shuddered in the cold,
Beheld the old-time blossom at their feet again unfold;
The sparks went up to join the stars, in bright and eager bands,
And on the white walls of the tent the shadows clapped their
 hands;
The burning leaves kept shape and, rising, patched the air with
 black,
And eager grasses caught the flames, and flung their ashes
 back;
While in the midst, upon the ashes where the coals were
 massed,
A freakish fire-spirit gave its glimpses of the past.

Within the shadow of a shrub that stood beyond the flame,
A youth had waited unobserved, and now half fearful came.
Ah, beardless youth, blue eyed and fair; can ever such as thou
Possess the rugged wilderness and give it to the plow?
He sat beside the cheery fire and seemed but illy eased,
But when he found his human gift he had a voice that pleased;
And then we talked of common things, and watched the grow-
ing light,
Until he looked and asked if I had seen the Guard to-night.
“The Guard! what guard; the aged man whose hair is long
and gray?
At noon by yonder grassy bank he wandered where I lay.”
And then thrice asked, refusing twice, the blue-eyed youth
began
The story, here disfigured some, that turns about this man.

FIRST EVENING.

SUGAR MAKING.

THIS day of mine stern Winter held the slender hand of
Spring;

The priestly sun peered down upon them through a golden
ring;

The mists had made a bridal veil and hung it on the wood;
Above a spotless couch of snow the hills and forests stood.

The icy streams were wildly throbbing in their swollen veins,
And southern breezes, incense laden, danced above the planes;
In choppings where the settler toiled the wild deer browsed at
night;

The hungry bear forsook his den, and prowled till rosy light;
Along the river where the otter wore his royal coat,
The dusky hunter, watching, drew his bow-string to his throat;
The willow buds had burst their cells, and soon would tempt
the bee;

The foremost southern slope had shown but one anemone.

Within a neighboring sugar-bush, beside a settler's cot,
Surrounded by a drift of hills, by windy storms forgot,

A young man, standing by his kettle, watched the tinted foam
That tumbled on its restless bed, within a foreign home.

The camp had passed a busy day; the wind was in a swoon,
And many troughs were wanting care ere day had reached its
noon;

The mild-eyed oxen, that so long had toiled beneath their load,
And tracked the snowy northern slope with many a winding
road,

Were standing now with idle feet before the crotched oak,
Impatient at the long delay that kept them in the yoke.

The maple logs, that held the sooty kettle in their lap,
Were hollowed out and at the end displayed a froth of sap;
The workman, silent all the day, had often paused to cast
A homeward glance, and scan the path, and then resume his
task;

His hand was here, his heart was yonder where his father's door
Had swung a welcome to the form of his fair Isadore.

This maiden—daughter of the worthy pioneer who dwelt
Beside the sugar-maker's cottage, in the timber belt—
Had seen, while yet the day was young, the lofty plume of
smoke,

That stood among the forest trees, and o'er their summit broke;
And all the day her task had closed its heart, for she had
strayed

In thought and vision to the forest where her David stayed;

And now she followed in the footsteps of her straying thought,
And brought her sunlight to the wood as shrunk the day to
naught.

The boiling soon was done; the blackened logs were rolled
away;

The syrup given pails; the yoke on sturdy shoulders lay;
The restless oxen, now released, were striding on before,
And David wended homeward by his fair formed Isadore.

The cool air cast its load of silence at the lovers' feet,
And bore away the old-time story that is yet so sweet;
The full moon, peering through the tree tops, wore a gilded
crown,

And in the windows of the clouds the bright eyed stars looked
down;

The icy shelves above the brook were wearing day by day,
And clumps of willows showed their brackets chiselled out in
gray;

The floods retreating o'er the banks had dropped their bayo-
nets,

And in the black muck by the margin gleamed the brilliant
sets.

They touched a little swell of ground where trees were swept
away,

And skids of logs, fresh scored and hewn, beneath the moon-
light lay;

The birds that soon would come with spring were not to build alone,
But this would be a world to these when those from theirs had flown.

At hand the farmer's cottage stood, beneath a crest of trees,
By day the school of busy toil, by night the couch of ease;
And Jubal Sear held half his land and half the fruit in store,
For his loved David when he wed the fair formed Isadore.
His cribs were wasting, but his stalls with fat had overrun;
His rough log barn was twinned and forelapped, yet he wanted one;
His stacks were tanned by stormy time and still were half unfed,
And snowy flocks at night were gathered 'neath his straw-roofed shed;
The craft of plenty at his harvest ever seemed to moor,
And though it brought him opulence, the rich at best were poor.

Beyond the pasture by the meadows dwelt the pioneer;
His home, though early wanting comfort, never wanted cheer;
The first far western woodman's stroke had sounded at his door;
The first fair rose of western gardens was his Isadore.
Beyond upon the broken prairie were his fenceless fields;
His herds had learned the need of shifting, with uncertain meals;

And though his barns and sheds were narrow, still his house
was blessed

With downy beds and room sufficient for a passing guest;
And while his neighbor clutched at fortune, he was still content
To live with bald unthrift about him, taking what she sent;
But wildwood never had a patron more devout than he,
Or herd of deer or flock of brant a surer enemy.

The world was being closer masked; among the leafless trees
That stood around this humble cottage hung the dying breeze;
And when upon the western hills the flame of day died out,
The restless ghost of buried winter still would stalk about;
The giddy sparks above the chimney checked their rapid
flight,

And tunneled at the narrow windows lay the cheery light;
Within, the long, low room was filling with the ruddy glare,
That overran the seamy hearth-stone, crowding everywhere;
The white, rough walls were somewhat bald, yet showed a
hunter's gun,

Beside a brazen warming-pan that dazzled like a sun;
A doorless cupboard filled the corner, and upon its side
Were hams from many a wild deer's herd, but shrunken now
and dried;

And here, upon a pair of antlers, hung a coonskin cap,
And there, beside a bear's huge paw, appeared a rusty trap.
Across the room, beneath its pillows, stood a portly bed;
It wore a quilt of many hues, its curtains once were red;

To make its arch a hundred brant had ceased a wandering
life,

And given up their wealth of plumage to this thrifty wife;
The ladder leading to the loft had gathered weary feet
To dreamy realms where rains of summer come with airy beat;
The basswood floor was neatly sanded, and a new splint broom
Was standing o'er a fallen brother in a nook of gloom;
The hound was lying on the hearth-stone, and his muscles
twitched

As if he dreamed of hunting foxes, that of late bewitched;
And still the long, low room was filling with the ruddy glare,
That overran the seamy hearth-stone, crowding everywhere.

Within was farmer Sear and wife, who came for David's sake
To give a passing evening wings, and help the shell-ice break;
The good wives sat apart and talked of days that long were
dead,

But thinking ever of their children who were soon to wed;
The Pioneer had ceased the stitching on his bear-skin coat,
And dropped it on the floor beside him, keeping talk afloat;
He seemed at ease; his heart was light, as if his lips had wine,
And glancing back upon his by-gones many seemed divine;
He took the milk of stream and wildwood when he was a boy,
A dog had been a boon companion, and a gun a toy;
But with his eastern haunts grown barren through a lack of
game,

He westward cast his restless vision, then in body came,

And builded here beside the prairie for his comely wife,
And kept his herd, and grew his corn, and led an ideal life.
His heart had many chambers, and he gave no needless pain,
And none who hungered at his door had ever come in vain;
And they who sought to plant their homes upon surrounding
land,
Had ever felt a welcome here, and found an open hand.

But hard and stern was farmer Sear; his world was bleak and
cold;
And days were husks unless they brought their proper weight
of gold.

Upon New England's rocky hills his early lot was cast,
And nature's forced economy within his life had passed;
And now, amid these generous fields, where he had come to
dwell,

He stood with early habits fixed, and they had served him well;
This evening he had turned a leaf upon his cherished plans,
For larger herds, and fuller folds, and more productive lands,
And seemed at leisure, though alert to try a dart of wit
At every target that appeared, delighted when it hit;
And still delighted, flinching not, whene'er his quick attack
Induced a truer hand than his to fling a weapon back.

His wife was somewhat faded now, but in her youth was such
As men will weigh in balances and take rejecting much,
And more, indeed, possessing her the heart would ne'er repine
Though that rejected still had shown some quality divine,

And, being with her day by day, you could but say in truth,
Her presence was the fabled fount that gave perpetual youth;
Forever modest, ever kind, her talk was brief and light,
She seldom took the privilege to prove her statement right;
And duty led her by the hand, and love was at her side,
And he was wealthy, having naught, who won her for a bride.

Beside her sat the black-eyed force that ruled the Pioneer,
She boasted French descent and name, her voice was sharp
and clear;

The raven hue upon her head was knotted in a cap,
And foreign dyes were on the hands that crossed upon her lap;
A gun was easy in her grasp, and in an early day
Her ball had struck a prowling wolf, and tamed a stag at bay;
And she could yoke the mild-eyed team and labor out of doors,
And when the busy season came would help about the chores;
But still her hearth was storm-beset, and with a tempest come
’Twere better that the world is large, and distance makes
us dumb.

The youth now paused; I heard a footstep; turning whence
it came,
The stealthy Guard was dimly outlined by our falling flame;
I rose and went to bid him welcome, but he turned away,
The years upon his shoulders broad in drifts of whiteness lay;
I turned again to meet my guest, but lo! he, too, had fled;
And darkness filled the world around, and all of life seemed dead.

SECOND EVENING.

THE INN.

THE shrunken day again had gathered on the western hills;

The purple wine was atomized that cloudless eve distills,
Save on the low horizon's edge, where stretched a line of light
Like prairie grasses burning on a breezy summer night;
The dusky butments fast were building in the valleys low,
And soon the wondrous structure with a starry roof would
grow,

That disembodied spirits, though unseen by mortal eye,
Might haunt its silent chambers, and their noiseless labors ply;
The low-browed visage of the moon was just above the wood,
And showed the satin lining in her poorly fitting hood;
And on the long, low wall of cloud, that now had turned to
white,

Prompt Hesper from his watch-tower peered, the one-eyed
guard of night.

Upon the body of the dark the camp-fire made its wound,
And in the top of neighboring pines the breezes gathered
sound;

The shadows flapped their dusky wings upon the white walled
tent,
And passed from sight amid the silent waste of firmament;
Within the narrow gorge below, the sweet voiced whippoor-
will
Dropped staves of music in the dull roar of the lonesome rill;
I sat and listened to the sound, until intruding feet
Recalled the soul to consciousness, and to a world less sweet;
The blue-eyed youth had come again, and seated in the light,
On being urged, resumed the story he began last night.

A day when gentle spring was busy on the southern slope,
Reclaiming sealed-up nature from her double envelope,
An empty-handed hunter stood upon the river's bank,
And watched the fattened flood below, that passed with foamy
flank.
His build was somewhat low and stout, his look was stern and
cold,
The heart that flamed up in his eyes was passion filled and
bold;
The brow above his bearded face betrayed the inner form,
As yonder cloud above the wood betrays the hidden storm.
He slowly turned his foot away and wended down the stream,
The lofty banks of wasting stone showed many an ice-stitched
seam,

And winter, going from the wood, left here and there a bed
Upon the carpeting of leaves, which now was wet and red.
He passed a deer within the dell, and left it there unharmed;
The bear that prowled along the bluff beheld him unalarmed;
The boom of grouse and bark of fox received no second
thought;

The hand was empty all the day, for other game was sought.
He entered now a narrow gorge by waters worn in stone,
Its bottom clothed with undergrowth, its walls with mosses
grown,

And took the boat that waited like a monster in a dream,
And heaved it from its rocky couch, upon the swollen stream.

Across the flow the bluffs, receding, left a wooded nook,
In which the narrow Inn was standing by a sandy brook;
Resort of hardy lumbermen, whose rafts were held in tow
By currents of a cruel stream, to markets far below.
The boatman notched the bar of sand the floods had left in
store,

And clambered up the sloping bank to enter at the door.
Within the rudely furnished room were three untidy men,
And two were gaming at a board, and liquor ruled the den.
The other rose as if to honor his uncommon guest,
And called him Captain when he ventured some half whispered
jest,

About a rose of yonder wood that should adorn his breast.

The Captain looked a stern rebuke, and ordered food and wine,
But muttered in an undertone, "The rose shall yet be mine."

The two that played were quieted, and since the Captain came,
The swarthy Dwarf had seemed to lose his pleasure in the game;

From early morn his art had served, and he was self-possessed,
And being now discomforted he lost his wish to jest;
The evil spirit that possessed his body with his birth,
Had fed him with the husk of pleasure, and the silt of mirth;
And shunning all of common life, and being shunned by all,
He early sought this western outpost where the world was small;

And many a raftsman of the river still has words to say,
About this wicked, dark-skinned Dwarf, and tricks he used to play;

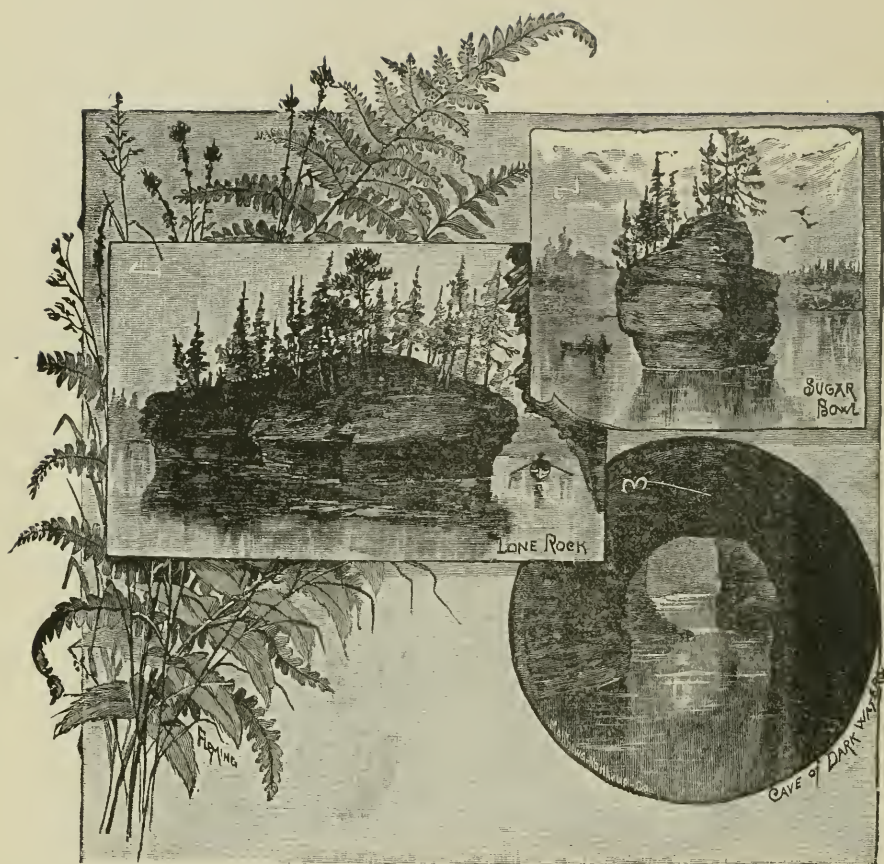
For he was ever on the watch to tip a loaded boat,
Or misdirect a traveler, or set a raft afloat,
Or sand a pudding for a guest, or salt a cup of tea,
Or spill a glass of liquor with a frank apology.
But in the Captain's presence he was meek as any maid,
And talked of truth and honor when a game of cards was played;

And at his slightest bidding he would do an honest deed,
Or go a score of miles at night to make a raftsman bleed.

The other player drank his liquor like a thirsty man,
His hair was gray as any wolf, he had a harvest tan;
His single eye was growing dim, but twinkled like a star,
And on his thinly-bearded face a wound had left a scar.
He wore a belt, and hunting jacket that was soiled and old,
A pair of aged buckskin breeches warded off the cold,
And on his feet were moccasins, with fur upon the seam,
The careful work of dusky hands by some far northern
stream.

This man had once been civilized, and led a quiet life,
But broken in his spirit by a fair and faithless wife,
He sought the western wilderness, and never yet returned
To neighbor, or to early home, or her he loved and spurned;
And he had lately wandered hither, from his far retreat
Within the wilderness of pine, whose solitude was sweet,
And placed his wealth of furs upon the market just below,
And bought the necessities for the life that soothed his woe;
But stopping at the river-inn that he had lately passed,
The swarthy Dwarf had spread his net, and liquor held him
fast.

The cook was busy at his meal; his face was smooth and
white,
He moved about his humble task as if his heart was light;
And he could serve a slice of ham, and brown a batter cake,
Or set a loaf of Indian bread, or broil a wild-deer steak,



FROM THE C. J. M. & ST. P. RY CO.

1. A face of stone still guards that island, bleak and lone.
2. The ducks are yielding up their haunt.
3. The water raves in lonely caves,
But none shall ever find
The hidden haunt of specters gaunt,
By witch or wizard mined.

With all the unassuming manner of a model wife —
But this was but a handy mask to hide another life.
In youth this man was promising, although his birth was dark,
Good fortune held him in her lap, and bid him make his mark;
Adopted by an easy planter of a southern state,
The field of knowledge lay before him with an open gate,
And honor left her door ajar, and wealth unlocked her vaults,
And bid him take the golden keys, forgetting birthday faults;
But worthless blood was in his veins, his soul was dark with
 crime,
And so he joined a mountain band, notorious in its time,
And helped to plunder city bank, and quiet country seat,
Then fling defiance at the law within a safe retreat;
And when the band had broken, it had left this restless ghost,
That came to join the Captain at his far-off western post;
And speculate in lumber, and to linger for a day
Upon the border of the world, and turn mistrust away.

The Captain sent a messenger to bid a native come,
Who on the wooded bluff above had pitched his wandering
 home;
To gain co-operation of this native and his band,
In execution of a plot he held an open hand.
The Dwarf was quick to bear the word, but ere he had re-
 turned
He dropped 'an Indian blanket on the fagots, where it burned,

And flung a shower of pepper in a bowl of pounded corn,
And slyly pulled the stopple from the hunter's powder-horn;
But ere he reached the inn again he had a faint regret,
That nothing more had been accomplished for this watchful set.

The river here upon whose banks the worthless inn was made,
Was nature's dustless highway to a busy world of trade.
Far up among the tributaries, where the fields of pine
Retain the chorus-making voice that ever would repine,
Industrious bands of hardy men were busy day by day,
In felling, and unjointing trunks, and whirling them away
To river-banks, where, being branded, they unvoiced would wait
The coming of the freakish flood to open up its gate;
And then descending to the boom, were sorted for the mill,
That took away their aged coats, and left them stark and still;
And then the field-flat rafts were made, and started for a trip
O'er leagues of foamy rapids, and by many a rocky hip,
O'er sunken bars, by sandy islands, and by wooded points,
And narrows, with their rocky walls, and never straightened
 joints;
And happy he whose raft was anchored at the market's door,
With nothing wanting in the sturdy human freight it bore.

This day the season's foremost raft had braved the river's rise,
And reached the freshet-made lagoon, now filled with floating
 ice,

And anchored there above the inn, among the isles that stud
The water with their wooded growth, and turn aside the flood.
The Dwarf was ready with a boat to bear the crew ashore,
But showed displeasure that so many shunned an open door;
To satisfy his little soul, or daunt his single guest,
He played above the narrow mouth through which the waters
pressed;

Upon the raft the men were shouting, still he lingered there,
And passed beyond the strength of oar before he was aware;
The raftsman tried a manly arm, and seemed to hold the boat,
But swift and soon the hungry outlet sucked it down its throat.
The rocky walls were dark and bold; the floods were wild and
high;

And jaws of rocks were white with froth, and ice was crowd-
ing by;

And here were cisterns capped with foam, and there the eddies
whirled

Their grasp of floodwood that was moving to a warmer world.
The swarthy Dwarf upon the bottom seemed to shrink with
fear;

His voice was deadened by the flood, but still he kept his leer;
And when the boat would tilt and dip, and blocks of ice would
crowd,

He shook as with an ague-chill, and still would moan aloud;
But once he dared to touch an oar, but failed to hold it fast,
And, slipping from his nerveless hand, adown the stream it
passed.

The boat went on, the flood went on, and bore the icy blocks;
The river-spirit brewed its yeast, and spilled it on the rocks;
The bold-browed walls were damp with sweat, and here and
there were roots,

Like swollen veins upon the forehead when the hot blood
shoots;

And splashing were the floods in caves, and climbing every
seam,

As if to clutch the icy needles, pointing at the stream;
And sheltered nooks had counter-currents, bearing foamy
flecks,

Like flocks of sleeping swans that floated, with protected
necks;

And still the boat and flood went on, and still the ice was there;
The river-spirit brewed its yeast, and spilled it everywhere.

A horrid monster is this Death, and cruel at the best;
He often will unman a man, to leave his life unblessed;
But when his voice is on the flood, and hollow in the ear,
And when he claps his ghostly palms, and none are watching
near,

Thrice horrid is his cold embrace, and cruel is the wave
That bears thee down, and holds thee down; alive, yet in a
grave!

But yonder stands the humble inn! If thou can'st hold thy
boat

Along this narrow channel, where the ice is less afloat,

Thou mayest yet escape his grasp, and live another day;
Now steady, raftsmen, hold thine own! and thou, base spirit,
pray!

'Tis done! 'tis done! the ice is closing, but the boat is passed;
And yonder whirls the foamy surge, and thou art saved at
last.

The wretched Dwarf that long had seemed deformed as well
as daft,

Now quickly sprang ashore, and, fleeing, clapped his hands
and laughed.

The heated raftsmen caught his aim as if to strike him dead,
But filled his purpose up with words, and watched him as he
fled;

Then sprang upon the sandy bar and dragged his boat ashore,
And clambered up the narrow path that ended at the door.

The camp-fire now was burning low; I rose to give it wood;
The aged Guard was in the gloom, and like a statue stood;
But when the burning branches cast their flock of eager
sparks,

He seemed awakened from his sleep, like winter woke by
larks;

And slowly turned and moved away beyond the wheel of light
That quickly crowded out its rim upon the bounds of night;

And then the blue-eyed youth arose, but had a frightened look,
And when he stroked my faithful dog his hand was white, and
shook;

And then I bid the mastiff give him friendship through the
wood;

And when the footsteps died away the pines revealed their
mood.

THIRD EVENING.

THE MILL.

I.

HOME, home, humble home;
Thou wert dear to me!
Alone, alone, though far I roam
Thy memories come to me
Like perfume of a blossom
Unto a wandering bee.

II.

Home, home, humble home;
Grave of joy to me!
Alone, alone, and far I roam,
Yet in my dreams I see
The angel at the portal
That waited once for me.

III.

Home, home, humble home;
Never more to be!

Alone, alone, and far I roam —
O, stranger, weep for me,
For I have lost the harbor
Upon this icy sea.

What disembodied voice is this, that renders unto me,
In sweet, and deeply touching tones, the old Guard's history?
It sounded in the narrow gorge, where waters dashed on
stones,
And made their changeless interlude, among the lower tones;
I took a blazing knot of pine, and sought the winding stair,
That nature chiseled in the rock to lead the venturer there;
The night was dark, the gorge was wild, the path was hedged
and old;
The winds that buffeted the torch were filled with mist and
cold;
The bats were wheeling round about, and on a lonely perch
A doleful voice was questioning the right to make the search;
But ere I reached the lonely chamber filled with constant
sound,
A lighter stave was set afloat, and echoes throbbed it round:

The water raves in lonely caves,
But none shall ever find
The hidden haunt of specters gaunt,
By witch or wizard mined.

A troop of clammy breezes cast their bodies on the torch;
It flared and perished, but their garments seemed to hiss and
scorch;

The doleful sound of falling waters filled the cavern up,
And overflowed its cold confines, like froth upon a cup;
And schools of whispers played about, and laughter seemed to
float

In unseen chambers far below, from some half human throat;
The night was dark, the gorge was wild, the breeze was damp
and cold,

The spirits of a thousand years had made this depth their hold.
But when I reached the camp above, the blue-eyed youth was
there,

His cheek was redder than before, but still his face was fair;
He seemed to know the recent search had been of small avail,
And when the flame had been re-fed, again resumed the tale.

A thrifty man was farmer Sear; he rose before the light
Had crowded far above the hills, upon the base of night;
But David wandered in a dream; he saw with inner eyes
A fair formed maid, who, waiting, stood by gates of Paradise;
Around were birds of wondrous hues, and beasts of quiet
ways,

And rivers gleamed among the trees, beneath the noonday
blaze;

The tree of endless life was there, though guarded by a sword;

And knowledge with its bitten fruit, and vines of grape and gourd.

He beckoned to the radiant maid, who came with naked feet

Across the intervening grass, and they were soon to meet

Beside a fragrant flower-garden, walled around with stone,

But there a monster bore her off, and he was left alone;

And then, awaking, on his heart he bore a load of pain.

And though he rose and flung it off, it still would come again.

The day was filling up the east, and points of yellow light

Were radiating from the sun, and making wonders bright;

The spring of late had bathed the earth with more than common care,

And drags of fowls were harrowing the upper fields of air;

The robin built her basket home, and by the wood a dove

Was overflowing with its doleful monody of love;

Upon the flat the prairie cock rebeat his battle drum,

And in the honey-bearing willows grew the busy hum;

Beside the barn the colored flock, around Sir Chanticleer,

Were eager laying bare the spindle of the yellow ear;

The flocks were scattered o'er the fields, which showed a tint of green,

And by the margin of the wood a prowling wolf was seen;

The cattle quarreled round the racks, while they were being
fed;

And David flung them ample locks from out the brown stack's
bed;

He waited now, as oft before, to see them wisp the hay,
And fix his choice, if choice befell, upon his wedding day;
And then the chaffy barn was entered; colts were given care —
This promise of a fleeter team, and more becoming pair —
But ere he shook the seedy food, responsive to a voice,
His heart had made selection thrice, and twice transferred its
choice;

For they had been his early care, his future hope and joy,
But now he went to sterner life, to be no more a boy.
And here the mild-eyed oxen stood, but each would toss its
head,

And show impatience or affront, if it were second fed;
But they had found but little room within the young man's
heart —

Too slow for youthful petulance, and they were now to part.

The breakfast hour approached; the kitchen filled with fragrant
smells

Of cooking meats, and baking cakes, and steaming vegeta-
bles;

But David, errand boy of meals, for yellow butter sent,
Cast farewell glances at the cellar's winter-store unspent;

The passage thence was fringed with mint, and rolls of precious bark,

And bags of hops and garden seeds inhabited the dark;

And turnips, gathered from the wood, made somber button-strings,

And bloodroot horns and varnished peppers hung in showy rings.

And in the cellar heaps of turnips showed their shriveled balls,

Retreating piles of beets and carrots slanted to the walls;

And here were boxes filled with parsnips, onions shedding skins,

And seas of rusty-clad potatoes, lowering in the bins;

Beside the stairs were kegs of syrup, while a barrel stood

Immovable with weight of sugar from the maple wood;

And here were jars of mouldy pickles, vinegar-smelling jugs,

And plum preserves, and crimson bottles with their paper plugs;

And lessening crocks of spicy berries, while a shelf had massed

Its crocks of sweet and yellow butter, that were reached at last.

This day unsteady hands had spilled the breakfast cup of mirth;

The farmer looked as if bad news had dropped upon his hearth;

His wife, forever cheerful, now her birth-right gift forgot,
And oft was casting thoughtful glances out across the lot;
But David had a lighter heart; he knew to-morrow's gray,
Though leading from the parent roof, would bring his wedding
day;

And there was need of lighter mood around the ample board
On which this royal housewife spread her appetizing hoard;
The mutton steak was fresh and sweet; the batter-cakes were
brown;

The home-made syrup had a flavor foreign to a town;
And steamy loaves of Indian bread, and butter worth the
while;

A hundred eyes in baked potatoes made a sightly pile;
And pumpkin pie, and yellow squash, and pickled blocks of
beet,

And more than I can stop to tell, or they could stop to eat,
For David needs must yoke the team to go by dale and hill
Across the country, bringing back the lumber from the mill.

But it was somewhat different where dwelt the Pioneer;
All eyes were sparkling with mirth, and voices showed good
cheer;

And e'en the dark-eyed, wordy ruler of these narrow walls
Was tender to her Isadore, and sparing in her calls;
But, as for these, the coming wedding seemed a day too late,
For all preparing now was done, and they must sit and wait;

And now and then the thrifty wife would view the shelves that
bore
Such weight of wealth and beauty as they never had before,
And wondered what the Sears would say when they received a
look,
And what the groom would think about his future wife as
cook.

But Isadore had wandered forth to find the morning air,
And gather early blossoms, that had never seemed so fair;
And plucking by the sandy way she held her handful fast,
As David, with his white-horned team, went, singing love lays,
past;
And then they met, and down the roadway wandered side by
side,
True David and his Isadore, so soon to be a bride;
And she had never seemed so fair, or he so frank and true,
As on this long-remembered morning when the year was new.
They passed the wooded hill and parted in a lonely dell —
But thought to pass a sterner hill before their last farewell,
On which love-words were blades of grass, and moments
grains of sand,
And tender smiles the grasp of blossoms they would hold in
hand —
And parting here the fair-formed maiden leaned against a stone,
And David paused because of beauty where she stood alone;

But beauty higher than of form, yet this alone would throw
A veil on human work and flush the cheeks of Angelo;
But more her eyes; for they were such as seldom men behold
Without a brazen gaze, and, when ashamed, again grow bold;
Nor less her spotless skin, yet snow is cold as well as white,
But here was snow as softly colored by the northern light;
A smiling maid, with flowing hair, beside a mossy rock,
And this was all to passing eyes, and they could stand the
 shock.

When David turned and hurried forth to gain his vanished
 team,

He bore the painful recollection of his morning dream;
And ere he passed from sight beyond a wooded, road-wound
 hill,

Thrice looking down upon the dell he saw her waiting still,
As if she, too, would come to meet him at his first command,
But, wanting this, she only waved the blossoms in her hand.

Within a neighboring southern wood an interrupted stream
Had made a silver bottom in a cool and rocky seam,
Through which, for untold centuries, it kept a shelving flow,
Between its slowly wasting walls, to sunny vales below;
Along its banks the trees were such as wear a showy dress
While icy bands of dreary winter clasp the wilderness;
Upon the outlet of the stream was built a humble mill,
That fed upon the lumber-growth, and, though its voice is still,

The early settler, near and far, before supplies increased,
Came down with empty wanes to bear the fragments of its
feast.

This mid-day hour when David came upon his distant quest,
Like bird that seeks a lining for the rough walls of its nest,
The mill was motionless, although beside the massive wheel
The waters still flung down their weight, as if to urge the steel.
Bold wooded bluffs had walled around this little plot of land,
And at their feet the waste of waters made a silver band;
And spring was apt to hurry here, and summer linger long,
To hear the music of the mill, and keep the brook in song;
A cot was nestled in a nook, and David heard within
The voice of singing, broke by music of a violin;
The workman's baser meal was done, and now he fed his heart
With the delicious melody that waited on his art.
He paused to give a welcome to his unexpected guest,
And then, on being urged, resumed the pleasure of his rest;
And David waited while the player seemed to touch in vain,
Until he caught the sudden rapture of his broken strain.
And then his guest and bare surroundings seemed to be forgot,
And scales of music filled the hollow of his humble cot.

The room had low and narrow walls; a canvas on its side
Had colored outlines of a city once the Mormon's pride;
And, touched by sunlight in the morning, first to meet his eyes,
And there when evening fires were kindled, still lost Paradise;



FROM THE C., M. & ST. P. R.Y. CO.

The maiden still, in nights of storm,
Flits round this isle in phantom form,
And makes a sobbing sound.

Upon the humble couch below, by many colors flecked,
Was laid the open bible of his loved though misled sect;
But he had lived a righteous life, and now would gladly lead
The scattered world about his door to take his holy creed.
He laid his instrument away, and then his youthful guest
Revealed his recent dream that since was weight upon his
breast;
To which the Mormon listened, saying, "Much is mystery
In life, and there is more about us than the eye can see;
And some have visions, scouted oft, but still we know they
come,
And I should take this dream to be a warning from the dumb,
And stand thrice watchful till the day on which I gained my
bride;
The warning, being such, will break when she is at thy side."
And David rose and took his lumber from its frosty bed,
And turned his cattle on their footprints, and his heart was lead.

The story-teller paused; a cloud, that late had gained the sky,
Flung down a grasp of liquid pearls as it was passing by;
We heard them rattle on the leaves above the canvas tent,
And plunge within the pile of ashes, leaving but a dent;
A bribe of silence, flung upon the story of my guest,
And he accepted, heeding not his listener's request;
But, promising to come again, he dropped the old remark,
And passed beyond the noiseless curtain of the starless dark.

FOURTH EVENING.

THE CAPTURE.

THE day was autumn's cion, grafted on a summer bough;
A gloomy rain had drenched the earth but that was finished now,

And I had watched the changes, snugly housed within my tent,
In that kaleidoscope — the wonder-making firmament.

The sullen morn had shivered all the lances of the sun,
And called the fleecy clouds away to color them with dun,
And prune their gold and purple margins, letting them return
To wash the amber from the air, and flecks that still would burn;

And noon had spilled a gulf of ink upon the porous sky,
The air was filtering the flood, and winds were trooping by,
And guns were booming, north and south, and bayonets of light

Kept thrusting through the cloudy curtains that concealed the fight;

At eve the mighty terror of the air had passed away,
And in the east a brilliant arch had spanned the door of day;

And westward all the piles of clouds were being set ablaze,
To clear the gloomy firmament for future sunny days.

The camp-fire sulked among the logs, and when I gave it food
It hissed and showed a rapid tongue, then gained a better
mood;

The lamps were being lighted in the windows of the sky,
The storm-swept pines had hushed their voices, watching
earth's reply;

While in a distant gorge the fox that hunted in the dark,
Had scared away a troop of echoes with his sudden bark;
The village bell set undulations on the resting air,
Announcing to the Shepherd's flock the hour of evening
prayer;

And while for me the distant tones were making memories
sweet,

I heard the rustling of the branches, stirred by passing feet;
The blue-eyed youth had come again to give the evening
flight,

And, seated by the tent, he kept the promise made last night.

When David passed from sight beyond the wooded, road-
wound hill,

His Isadore was in the vale, and she was waiting still,

When hastily upon her track approached her father's hound,
And he was quick to show his pleasure that his quest was
found;

But while he yet retained the favor that was due his worth,
The roadside underbrush was stirred, and gave a hunter birth;
The maiden recognized the Captain from the worthless inn,
Though unsuccessful in the past, he wooed and still would
win;

He gave a passing compliment, and seemed but ill at ease,
Yet hastened to renew the suit that long had failed to please;
He urged his gold, and title, and his stretch of eastern land,
And blamed her since she loved him not, with these at her
command;

And blamed her still that she was fair, and so had gained' his
love,

And thought himself like yonder oak without its cooing dove;
Then asked if she would deign to change the purpose of her
breast

When yonder bird should choose this tree in which to build a
nest.

She said, "When fire shall smite that bird upon its nesting
tree,

And mingle all in common wreck, then thou mayest come to
me;

Till then pursue a different quest, and thou shalt leave me now,
Lest I repent of this rash speech, and break it with a vow."

And when she turned to leave him there he begged her lily
hand
Might single out and touch this oak that he might understand;
And though she thought of treachery she met him with a jest,
But when he asked again she turned to grant this strange
request.

The oak was standing in the space where three well wooded
hills
Had made a little plat of green and given tangled frills,
And waters from the sandy road had hither made a pass,
While underbrush on either side grew in a pathless mass.
Her faithful dog was at her side, and few the words she
spoke,
While passing through the wild defile that led her to the oak;
She flung a blossom by the tree, and ere departing said:
“When fire shall smite, and this shall grow, then thou mayest
hope to wed.”

The Captain bowed before the tree as if he breathed a prayer,
And took the blossom in his hand, and still was kneeling there
When, suddenly, a score of plumed and brightly painted foes,
From the dark borders of the hill-surrounded gorge arose.
The kneeling Captain gained his feet but missed his hurried
aim,
Then clubbed his weapon, striking fast, but still he struck in
vain,

And then, though bravely struggling, by odds was forced to
ground,

And the good hands that failed him thrice at last were firmly
bound.

The dog was at the maiden's side, and with his fangs soon
wrote

The hieroglyphics of his rage upon the foremost throat;

And stricken down he rose again and sprang upon his foe,

But quivered on the green at last beneath a cudgel-blow.

The maiden like a rooted lily seemed, while on her hands,

With more than common care, a savage tied his buckskin
bands —

For she had lost her feet, and stood as if her thought had fled

With the bright color of her cheek, and she was like the dead;

But still she heard the Captain speaking, though his voice was
low;

He held her weight in gold and rum if they would let her go;

But one who had a dwarfish form, and color like the night,

Was quick to smite him on the word, and brandish weapons
bright,

As if to warn that future speech was better kept than said,

And he who once was foremost, now must bow to those who
led.

Below the green and narrow plat, and farther in the wood,

A numerous troop of Indian horse, but unattended, stood;

And hither came the dusky band, and brought the man and
maid,

In silence yet in ardent haste they reached the grassy glade;
And mounting here, the captors and the captives disappeared
Upon a wooded path that soon the open prairie neared.

Within a distant gorge, among a scattered herd of hills,
Where antelope were wont to gambol by the spring-made
rills,

And troops of deer to roam at pleasure by the grassy brink,
And startle schools of speckled trout when e'er they came to
drink,

An Indian camp was standing, and the gorge was wild and
wide,

And solid walls of seamy rocks were high on either side,
And at their feet the narrow tents were in a broken row,
The rapid stream was just before, and had a shelving flow.
The camp was quiet all this day, save broken by the shout
Of some swart youth, who flung upon the grassy slope a trout;
Or when his first true arrow struck the target in its heart,
Or else some finished game had crowned his strength or
blessed his art.

Beside the rapids, on the bank, an old and withered jade
Was closely watching angling or teaching those who played;
And now and then a dusky maid would flit from tent to tent,
Or pause to chant the love-lorn lay that told her discontent.

The day was closing when the captive band came slowly down
The green defile that led them to their ever wandering town;
Upon the weary captive's features brooded cold despair,
And he was somewhat sterner now, and she was always fair;
Still few have ever fallen in the hands of such as these,
And found their will of courtesy, or such a wish of ease;
For they had given foremost comfort to the captive maid,
And now she found a close attendant in this withered jade;
But still her bands were cast aside, and, guarded where she
went,

She had the freedom of the camp and shelter of a tent;
The latter, cheerless at the best, showed more than common
care,

And here were robes of buffalo, and garments of the bear;
And bowls of food were by the fire, as if an honored guest
Had been expected from afar, and here were warmth and rest.

The Captain on the journey hither had but little range;
But now within a distant tent his captors seemed to change;
And he had cast his gloom aside as one would cast a mask,
And found his ease as if relieved from some unpleasant task.
This tent was ampler than the rest, for in its walls were planned
The midnight raid, the season's hunt, and journeys of the
band,

And quarrels here were put at rest, and brothers reconciled,
And the rude legends of the tribe rehearsed to spirits wild;

But now the wasted stock of corn, and weapons of the chase,
And trophies of a recent hunt, were given foremost place;
But these had left sufficient plat of brown and trampled earth
For fagots to retain their rights, and robes display their worth.
To-night the Captain's wicked heart was haunted by a pain,
Because of thoughts of her he loved and now had vowed to
gain,

And still because she turned from him and stood uncomforted,
While luster from the eyes had vanished, and her color fled;
And so the tent grew hot and close; he rose and passed with-
out;

The dusky forms of silent men were flitting round about;
A crooked row of growing camp-fires showed its hills of light
Which far were forcing from the gorge the darkness of the
night;

The evening meal was cooking now, and giant shadows played
Upon the rocky wall above, when passed a man or maid;
The darkly outlined stream was falling from its shelf of rocks,
And making caps of mist to hold the hoary willow's locks,
And still kept filling up the air with dull and solemn sound,
That mingled with the rank perfume of food now floating
round.

He turned from these and slowly wandered down the grassy
bank,
Until he reached the reedy pond in which the waters sank;

And pausing here, he tried to break the circuit of his thought,
With what the night had cast around him, and the season
brought.

The odors spring supplied the winds had quieted their mood,
And fogs were stretching o'er the waters toward the outlined
wood;

The moon had hung a silver scallop in a cloudless sky,
And winking stars beheld the gazer, with replying eye;
Upon the hills the milky way had reared its ancient arch,
For spirits of the recent storm upon their homeward march;
And in the north the tilted dipper showed the polar star
To these storm spirits now in silence coming from afar.
Within the pond the frogs were croaking in their varied keys,
The reeds and grasses stood unrustled by the sleeping breeze;
The muskrat dredging in the shallows for his evening meal
Was outlined on the waveless stretch that shone like burnished
steel;

And now and then a wild duck called, or poised itself to fling,
With sudden noise, the spray of waters from its undressed
wing;

The distant sally of the loon was vanishing and shrill,
And wolves were quick in their reply upon a neighboring hill;
And still above the scattered choir, lit by nature's lamp,
Was heard the monotone of waters by the distant camp.
The Captain stood awhile in silence, and his heart was hot,
Because he thought of yonder captive and her sudden lot;

And love of her had brought repentance to his stubborn
breast,

A moment only, for the feeling was a stranger guest,
And then he turned upon the camp and sought his silent tent,
For on the morrow he must don the mask of false intent,
And wear it better than to-day, or bungle in his part,
And fail to gain a final triumph for his wicked heart.

Far northward in the wildernesses' restless sea of pine,
The lonely lakes like islands lay, and one pale river line,
By which an Indian town was standing like a mastless fleet
Upon an island-dotted sea with currents at its feet.
Below this spot the bottom-land was noted for its soil,
And corn was bountiful at harvest with but little toil;
The stretch of wilderness about was one vast hunting ground,
In which unlimited supplies of various game were found;
The neighboring streams were flush with fur; the lakes were
filled with trout;

And fruits and berries past their seasons lingered long about;
And so the tribe had made a center of this favored spot,
And built their foremost town upon it, by the river-lot.
In summer many a hunting party wandered toward the south,
And some had floated in their shells beyond the river's mouth;
While others on the rolling prairie grew their fields of corn,
Or launched their barks upon the waters toward the rising
morn;

But ere the frost was on the river, or the prairie white,
They came to join their kinsmen here and pass the coming night.

This tribe had once been powerful, and hostile to the white;
The settler watched for them by day, and dreaded them by
night;

But many a solitary workman served them for a mark,
And many a frontier home was doomed to light the fields of
dark;

But being overcome at last, the foremost chief was sent
To the far center city of this sea-girt continent,
At which his heart was awed, and he was humbled in the sight
Of the great world beyond his lodge, and conquered by its
might;

And after this, when he had gained the circle of his tribe,
He stood an advocate of peace, that war could never bribe;
And so he lost his rank and name, and played a humble part,
And rivals called him Brokenbow, the chief who had no heart.

Now, when the southward wandering kinsmen brought the
man and maid,

That they had lately captured in the wild and narrow glade,
Old Brokenbow was quick to see the dragon in the plan,
And slyly set his hand against the purpose of this man;
So when they were to be adopted, he by right was there
To swing aside a safe retreat to her so lone and fair,

But closed his door against the other, who at last was shown
A neighboring lodge where he might dwell and claim the
rights his own;

But by a custom now the two within the tribe must wed,
And here the Captain's purpose lay, and this had hither led.

Ah, timid youth, why tremble so; what terror haunts thy
breast;

Did harm befall fair Isadore within the wild hawk's nest?

Not that, indeed! then whence has come the pallor to thy face?

Did David play a recreant's part, and die in just disgrace? —

Then tell me what has won thy breath, and robbed thee of thy
voice?

Thou wouldst not play an actor's part, and move me of thy
choice!

The Guard! — not he; it was the wind that moans among the
pines,

I felt it freshen on the cheek from yonder land of vines;

Or else methinks — I heard it then — it is the hollow tone

Of lonely waters in the gorge, and not a human groan;

And that! forsooth; it was the shadow of this dying flame,

That flitted out across the gorge, and then was gone again.

What, wouldst thou go? the dog will keep the foxes from thy
heels,

Until thou bidst him come to me from yonder open fields.

FIFTH EVENING.

THE PURSUIT.

TIME, weird musician, thy melodious march
Entices all things living after thee;
Softly thou passeth by the door of life,
And childhood hails thee with its first drawn breath;
And then thou leadeth out through meadows fair,
Through groves and vales and vistas wonderful,
Until thou bringeth up to the estate
Where strength and beauty and attainments dwell,
Whence silently thou leadeth yet away
Through less inviting fields that quickly verge
Into a stretch of barrens, bleak and bare,
And leave dumb clay beside the open grave.

As troops of some unwelcome fancies pass to come again
And flit around the empty chambers of an idle brain,
Or lines of yester's half-remembered song will come and go
When all the house is quieted and fires are burning low,
Or saddened thoughts of her who waits the coming of the
 hearse,
So haunted me at twilight lone this half-forgotten verse.

I rose to fling it from my thought and dress the flaring lamp,
That crowded out its hill of light around the lonely camp;
And while I watched the swarm of sparks upon their upward
flight,
The blue-eyed youth regained the seat that he forsook last
night;
And, when were passed the old remarks that still are always
new,
He cast a restless look about and the narration grew.

Since Isadore came not, her father's cottage took alarm,
And soon her wild walks would be questioned if they did her
harm;
But now the dog came, bruised and bleeding, still appearing
shy,
As when outstripped in some fleet chase he fears the hunter's
eye;
His master bid him lead the way, and when obeyed at last,
Together up the sandy road the two in silence passed;
But when he seemed to hesitate the master cheered him on,
Until the wild defile was passed, and the dark dell was
won;
And then he paused, and standing there beneath the stately
oak,
He bayed a deep tone vanishing until the echoes broke.

Upon the narrow plat were marks of quick and struggling
feet,

And here was one fresh clasp of blossoms that the maid held
sweet.

Again the master urged him on; again he took the trail,
That led them through the rocky pass to reach the lower vale;
And here abruptly all was lost, and conquered by his pain,
He bayed until surrounding echoes answered him again;
Then sunk exhausted on the grass, and now no word of thine
Shall, master, ever cheer him on, or gain an answering sign.

The earth was trampled round about, and here were tracks
fresh made,

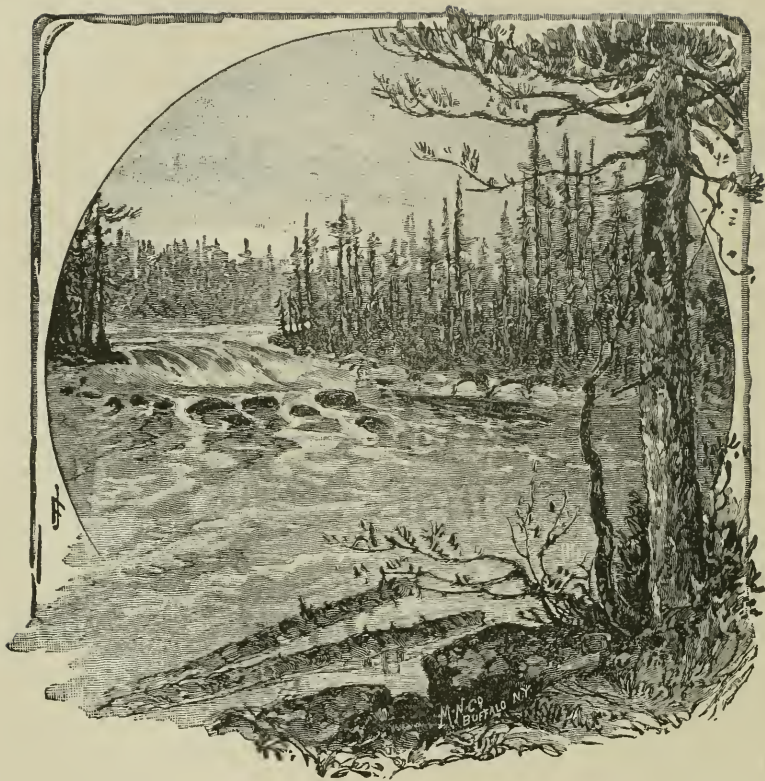
That led across the wooded hills which held the grassy glade;
But when they reached the prairie's stretch they made a sudden
maze,

To scatter and unite again upon their northward ways.

The setting sun had made the shadows by the neighboring fort,
Before the aged Pioneer arrived within its court;

(For he had left the mazy trail, returning to his door
To tell the sudden fortune of the fair-formed Isadore;
And David, coming from the mill, had checked his laboring
team

To hear the heavy words that brought fulfilment of his dream;
While he would rouse the lumbermen, the hardy Pioneer
Had come to move the garrison for her he held so dear.)



FROM THE M., L. S. & W. RY CO.

Above the starting point the river had an even flow,
But angry falls and rocky rapids mark its course below.

The day had been unquiet here, for now a new supply
Of food and raiment from above, with watercourses high,
Was being placed in store, as if to rout the ghost of want
That late had looked upon this outpost as a future haunt;
The barracks now were crowded some, but others, rudely
made,
Were lengthening well-ordered rows within the dark stockade.
The Pioneer had reached the door of him who held command,
Before the distant gate unbarred to pass a mounted band,
Who came from neighboring regions, where neglected fields of
lead
Were being worked by eager men, of late discomforted;
But they had come to show their wounds, and gain support of
those
Who had authority and will to rid them of their foes.

Within, the young commander sat, embodiment of grace;
He wore a military suit, and had a beardless face;
And he had done good service in the border wars of late,
But since the times had quieted, his growing fame must wait;
And while he chafed beneath the quiet of his changeless ways,
He watched with earnest eye the dawning of more active days.
So when Le Roy, the honored leader of this mounted band,
Made bold petition for the services of his command
(Because a prowling foe had struck a miner by his shaft,
And slain a herdsman by his stock, and wrecked a river raft,

Retreating to the distant town within the northern wood,
Whose inaccessible position schooled their hardihood);
The stern commander heard his warm request and frankly made
The promise of his kind support, and some far-coming aid;
But when the aged Pioneer laid bare his living wound,
The twin petition moved him, and a frank support was found.
And so the force would sally at the dawning of the day,
To leave the shadow of the Fort and take its northward way;
Le Roy would muster bands of miners in the fields of lead,
Who caught the fever of revenge around their fallen dead,
To join the expedition where the highest lumber camp
Was letting sunlight on a soil with stormy centuries damp.

'Twas evening when Le Roy and band repassed the heavy
gate,
To sweep along the fringe of forest whence they came of late;
'Twas midnight when they reached the hamlet where the tavern
light
Stole out through barricaded windows o'er the fields of night;
The dogs were baying at their kennels — keenest sentinel
That challenges approach of foe and questions friend as well;
Within were varied sounds of life, but revelry had fled
Before the stiller lips of vengeance for a brother dead;
His knock brought down the sudden challenge of the ready
guard,
But to his recognized response the oaken door unbarred;

Within the chain of long low rooms were sullen groups of
men,
And arms were gleaming on the walls around the ill lit den;
And many a sheath showed ready steel, and many a belt displayed
The long-range weapon or the hilt of some close-quarter blade;
And silent men were on the hearth, by midnight overcome,
Or by the dull and dreamy spirit lurking in their rum;
While others sat around the tables bearing piles of gold —
Result of half a season's strife and many a venture bold —
That now would pass beyond their sight, like rain upon the
soil,
To leave the need of other shift, or quick returning toil.

A sudden bustle filled the room, and men who sat as dumb
Had earnest word and brighter look to greet their leader come;
Then silence filled the gloomy walls, save broken by his word,
And every ear attention gave, and every heart was stirred;
For he had tracked the dusky raiders to that northern town
To which all plundering foes escaped, whence hostile bands
came down;
And so to-morrow's dawn would see the garrison en route
To this as yet uncleansed retreat to wipe the dark blot out;
And he, with every loyal miner in the brotherhood,
Would join them at the lumber camps, demanding blood for
blood.

And then he paused; the men were quick adjusting spur and
belt,
And many a lock was primed anew, and many a keen point
felt;

Fleet messengers were hurried off; the inn showed sudden life,
And earnest bands of mounted men were ready for the strife.

Far north a prosperous lumber camp had made a recent wound,
Upon the body of the wood that gave a mournful sound;
But now the season's toil was closed; to-morrow, with the day,
The men would leave the desolation on their homeward way;
So there was much of merry-making on this final night,
Around the twenty stacks of logs that grew their hills of light.
The day had brought its supper hour, and round upon the
air,

A sea of sweet perfumes was floating from their evening
fare;

For hunters, since the early morn, had sought the far retreats,
In grassy dells, to take the wild deer on its lonely beats;
And fishermen had wooed the lakes, and pressed the neighbor-
ing streams,

To quick and bounteous fulfilment of their closing dreams.

With thrust and ward of pointed wit the meal at last was
through,

And then each band of hardy men about the camp-fire drew;

The flames showed many a swarthy face, and many a brawny
hand,
The night air caught the merriment that floated round each
band;
And toasts were made, and cups were passed, and merry yarns
were spun,
Because the long and dreary winter of their toil was done;
But some had settled down to cards as if they sought to gain
A crumb of recreation for the hunger of a brain;
And some, with rubber blankets stretched upon old nature's
breast,
Were lapped in thought about the flame, or else were courting
rest;
And many a daring deed was told, and many a gallant fight,
By skillful hands, to listening ears, was fought again this night;
At last some heart that overflowed — perchance the drink was
strong —
Burst out with mingled thoughts of home in the full voice of
song.

I.

The camp-fires are lighted, but when will ye come,
Wood elves, wood elves:
To cheer a lone lumberman, wanting his rum,
Wood elves, wood elves?
But ended is labor, and loving one's wait;
The desolate wilderness closes its gate,
So adieu, so adieu!

To-morrow we go with the break of the day,
In footsteps of thoughts that are now on the way,
 So adieu, so adieu!
But who dares the winter camps,
Sleeping with frosty damps,
But he who would welcome a kind heart and true.

II.

So sprinkle sweet slumbers upon our lone beds,
 Wood elves, wood elves;
Give whispers to breezes that fondle our heads,
 Wood elves, wood elves;
Till these calloused hands, and these hearts that are true,
Possess the sweet blossoms that to them are due,
 Then adieu, then adieu!
But come to encourage these blossoms to bloom,
That all the long years may be filled with perfume;
 Then adieu, then adieu!
But who dares the lonely camps,
Sleeping with frosty damps,
But he who will wed when his labors are through.

When this was done, up rose a youth and said: "My friends,
 we claim
The fleetest foot, and truest hand for any race or game!

Let this be known; this middle mess holds championship of strength,

And asks its neighbors, east or west, to measure Philbrick's length."

The laughter went from group to group, and many gathered round

This merry mess in which the foremost wrestler was found;

The active second cleared a plat, and soon renewed his boast,

Then stood beside his champion and named a hurried toast.

The wrestler was a heavy man, as quiet as an ox,

But ever ready for a struggle or a bare-hand box;

And being known, few lumbermen were over free to pit

Their skill or strength against his brawn or tempt his second's wit;

At last a clear-eyed lumberman, as true of limb as straight,

Indignant that his betters feared, or seemed to hesitate,

On being asked, came up and said he would not voice a hope,

But for the evening's merriment he did not fear to cope.

Each eyed the other standing there until the ring was made,

And then they lightly stepped within, and hands were firmly laid,

And hip to hip, and knee to knee, they took the final word,

While laugh and jest from many a lip around the ring was heard.

Then feints were made to draw a guard or find the seat of strength;

They buckled closer to the strain, and warmly tugged at length;

The grape, the hip, the bar were tried, but stood of small
avail,

For one had skill, and one had strength, and neither seemed
to fail;

But still they danced about the ring as close and firmly bound
As any waltzers you have seen, when music made its sound.

Good Philbrick now was on his knee, but rising in his might
He flung his rival on the earth in pitiable plight;

The few who cheered the champion had made a crown ill
fit,

Had it not been for those bright jewels of his second's wit;

Then when the ring had been restored, anew the boast was
made,

Another good antagonist upon the earth was laid;

And then a seeming youth was brought, as if to mock the
might

Of this great champion, who seemed unwearied yet and light;

But when they grappled in, there was a lulling in the mirth,

Which burst more loudly when he flung the champion to
earth;

The laughter ceased, and Philbrick now was placed upon his
guard,

And clutched the match, and for a while he seemed to be well
starred;

But suddenly beneath the strain the double grip gave way,

And each with equal honor in the trampled circle lay;

And each was quick to rise again, but now a lonely dove,
Down sailing with the sudden noise, from some dark perch
 above,
Went tilting round the yellow light, as if in terror dread,
Until at last it hovered there above the young man's head.
Good Philbrick hastily drew back, and for a moment gazed
On his antagonist thus crowned, then turned away amazed;
Then merriment went round the camp, and many a toast was
 given
For that strange freak, pronounced by some the verdict of high
 heaven.

The owner of the lumber camp, within a neighboring shed,
Was bending o'er his daily page that showed its lines of red;
This man had been the first to plant the wilderness with gold,
And it had grown to bear for him a crop a hundred fold;
But still he loved the wild retreat, and though it brought him
 care,
Each winter found his lumber camp that laid a new field bare.
His foreman sat beside the fire; his thoughts were far away,
On grassy fields and fishy brooks by which he used to stray;
And, haply, in his thoughts again came back the blue-eyed
 fair,
That but as yesterday had smiled to wander with him there;
But he had come to seek his fortune in the wilderness,
And now, well satisfied, he wore the crown of his success;

He stood upon the edge of care, and with the rising sun,
He hoped to seek his early home and her his youth had
 won;
So when old Foster's search was done within the maze of
 books,
He touched the light guitar he held, with animated looks;
Then swept away a troop of chords, and found the piece well
 strung,
And wandered with soft melodies a while before he sung.

I.

'Twere sweet, 'twere sweet, again to meet,
By leafy brook, or wildwood street,
 Lost lady dear!
When flowers bloom, when leaves are sear,
And the day doth flee, I think of thee,
 Lost lady dear.

II.

The roses blow upon thy snow,
And lonely love shall tell its woe,
 Lost lady dear;
And whispers linger in the pine
For thee, for thee, my lost divine —
 Lost lady dear.

III.

And when the daylight and the fire
Upon the western hills expire,
 Lost lady true,
The shadows fall on all but you.
Let the fleet day flee; I think of thee,
 Lost lady true.

IV.

'Twere sweet, 'twere sweet, again to meet,
By leafy brook, or wildwood street,
 Lost lady dear!
When flowers bloom, when leaves are sear,
And the day doth flee, think, think of me,
 Lost lady dear.

A knock was heard upon the door, while yet the chords were
 strong,
And David entered at the word — ah, he has heard the song;
But now the tear is dashed away; he strives anew to gain
The manly certainty of voice that left him with that strain.
“What wouldst thou, stranger; food or rest? — speak, speak,
 and tell thy woe!
I bid thee welcome to a fire, and to a roof so low.”
“Not food, nor fire, is sought, nor rest; but on his bended knees
A stranger asks a sacrifice that shall outbalance these.”

And then he told of Isadore, the fair and matchless maid,
But lately snatched upon her walk within a southern glade,
And hurried to the den of wolves, the neighboring Indian town,
That lay upon this water course, where uplands tilted down,
And that the nearest garrison was on its hurried way,
To pass this highest lumber camp, with dawning of the day;
And bands of miners, to a dirk, were bringing their support,
From regions where prolific fields stretched southward from
the Fort;

And now, in woman's name, and love's, he came to ask that
they

Would join the expedition with the coming of the day.
Old Foster's eye was bright again, because that sudden word
Had brought the vision of a form, and memories that stirred;
And so he promised, bringing gold and zeal and honest art,
To bear upon the stranger's cause that had possessed his heart;
And David heard, then turned away, neglecting rest and food,
And quickly disappeared amid the shadows of the wood.

The youth now paused and held his slender hands before the
light,

And, shuddering, observed that he had tarried late to-night;
Then noticing the moon had set, he made some strange
remark,

About the silence of the wood, and seemed to dread the dark.

And feeling need of walking, we had willingness to keep
Him company beyond the wood, upon behalf of sleep;
At which he seemed surprised and said, "Nay, nay; ye must
not go!

And whence I am ye cannot come, and must not seek to know;
But rest thou here content if thou wouldst have me come
again,

To tell thee what befell the maiden in the wild wolf's den."
And then he turned and glided from the camp, with noiseless
tread;

And, covered by the pall of night, all form of life seemed dead;
Then while I mused beside the tent and watched the yellow
flame,

I heard the sound of heavy feet, and then the old Guard came;
The rusty gun was in his hand; his eyes were large and bright;
And on his shoulders and his breast the passing years were
white;

But when I bid him closer come, I heard the sudden scream
Of some strange night bird in the gorge, and he as from a
dream

Awoke, and wildly glared about, and darted from my sight
Within the unknown chambers of the dark and silent night.

SIXTH EVENING.

THE INDIAN TOWN.

NOW come with me if thou hast skill with fishing rod and
oar,

And need of putting life within, or mirth in memory's store;
Here lies the boat, and we will find the haunt of bass and
pike,

Where once the swarthy native struck, and still successors
strike;

We pass above the sunken bars, and o'er the darkened sweep,
Through which the waters from the north are moving to the
deep;

And here are islands, bearing groups of maples and of elms,
Their trunks are leaning with the floods that move to warmer
realms;

The ducks that anchor in the cove are yielding up their haunt,
But we have need to pass beyond to satisfy our want;

The boat is light, the oar is right, the stroke is good and
strong,

But you shall keep the talk afloat, and drop a verse or song;

Or wouldst thou greet the mild retreat, where only breezes
sigh,
With more becoming mood of heart, and language of the
eye;
But here a twin of islands wait; the maple growth outranks;
The waters linger cool and deep within the notch of banks,—
So plant the anchor; we have reached the haunt of bass and
pike,
Where once the swarthy native struck, and we have come to
strike.

From such delight as this I came, when sunset's farewell beam
Was resting on the wooded bluffs above the darkened stream;
Up through the narrow gorge in haste, where night had built
its nest
Before the crimson blush of evening faded from the west;
The depth was cold, and damp, and dead, yet overrun with
sound
Of lonely waters on the rocks, and night birds 'plaining round;
Then up the steep and rocky bank to reach the white-walled
tent,
And find the blue-eyed youth was there, with patience yet un-
spent;
So when the pile had been relit, to fill the camp with light,
He took the seat, and found the thread that he had dropped
last night.

Upon the home of Brokenbow the morning sun thrust beams,
And fair formed Isadore awoke from fitful sleep and dreams;
Unreal seemed the sudden past, the present seemed untrue,
But glancing around the quaint abode the stanced wound
bled anew;

A bar of light was in the window, but her eyes were blur,
The lonely couch on which she lay was soft with depth of fur,
And on the wall above were bows and many a feathered
shaft,

The knives that glimmered in a row showed carvings at the
haft;

But on another wall was hung a powder-horn and gun —
This modern weapon that had left the keenest barb outdone —
And there were trophies of the chase, and nameless kinds of
gear,

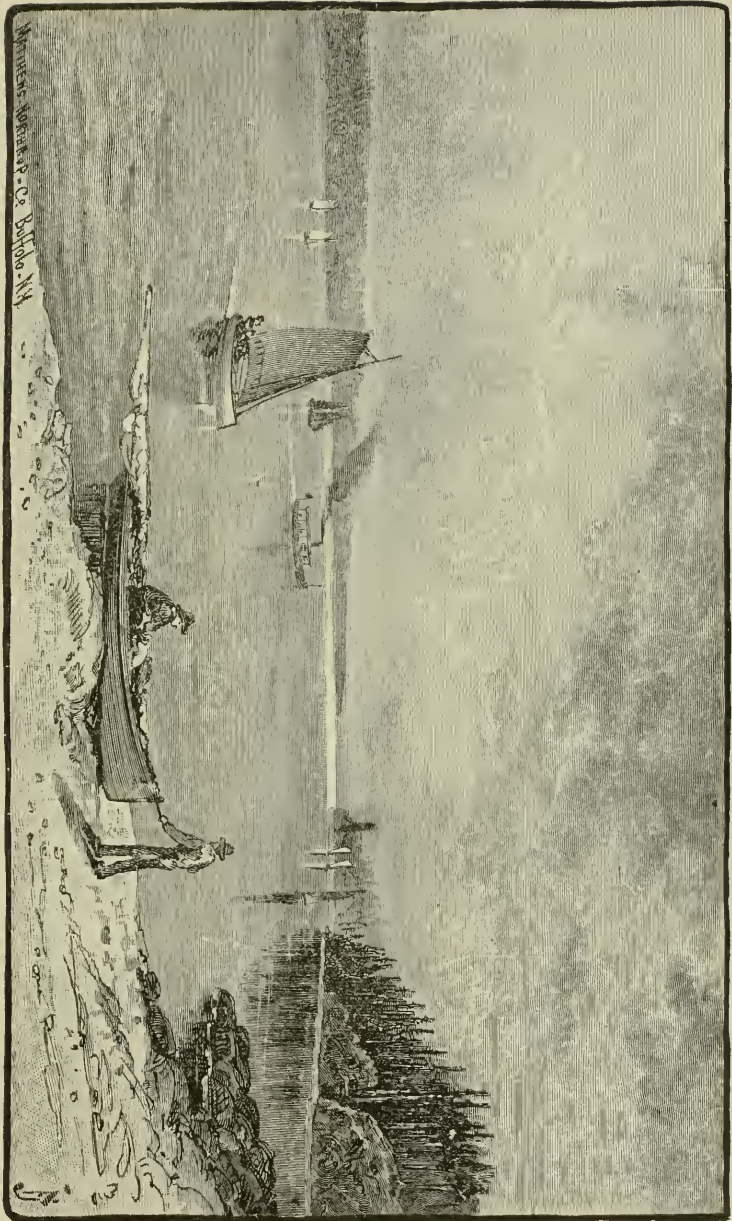
And gaudy plumes, and kettle drums, that dancers wait to
hear;

A corner had a crib of maize, and crowded sacks of meal,
Dark wooden bowls, and heavy mortars, that showed signs of
weal;

And river fish were smoked and dried, and spicy roots were
here,

And cured hams of bear and ox, and saddles of the deer;
But still this prosperous Indian home was dark with smoke,
and grim;

She rose and passed the narrow door to gain a light less dim;



FROM THE M., L. S. & W. RIV CO.

Where once the native's paddle dipped, successors spread the sail.

But pausing here beside the walls, she hastily surveyed
The near surroundings of the town, but speechless and afraid.

A palisade made half a circle to the river-bank,
And in its arc the humble houses showed a double rank;
Below, a rapid river washed the slopes devoid of grass,
Accessible within the town by one well guarded pass;
Beyond, a dark and gloomy stretch of wilderness appeared,
But here, beside the palisade, the lowly hills were cleared;
Before the houses, maid or wife was standing by a fire,
Preparing food to recompense the hunt of lord or sire;
A group of youthful bowmen put to test their strength and
 skill,
To find the heart of yonder target on the sloping hill;
And others whirled the tomahawk, or tilted flashing knife,
At figures stuffed or rudely colored, like distorted life;
The distant stretch of bottom-land, where they had raised their
 corn,
Was black and steamy with the fervor of the rising morn;
The stubble, gathered into heaps, was waiting sunny days
To disappear before the torch, for future growths of maize.

The captive wandered down the pass and reached the river's
 side,
Where dark canoes and fragile shells along the marge were
 tied;

The school of minnows in the shallows quickly stole from sight,
As she would gladly steal from others, and her lonely plight;
And gazing in the rapid waters, sudden thoughts arose
Of quick deliverance from being, and her hateful foes;
And then she thought of David Sear, and mother, and of home,
And wondered of her future fate, and when their help would come.
Around the bend, while yet she mused, canoes came drifting down,
Still making toward the landing-place beside this Indian town;
The signal-gun was answered soon, and then the town awoke,
And there was welcome at the landing by this simple folk —
For these were hunters, who had wandered many a day and night,
To take the gray wolf in his den, for some strange tribal rite,
That brought them feasting, dancing, mirth, and games of strength and skill,
And freedom, for the coming year, from spirits that were ill.
The boats were lightened of their freight, by this delighted band,
The wolf was placed upon a litter without touch of hand,
And borne in triumph up the pass, and still it rested well,
Beneath the potency of herbs that held it in a spell;
Then, by the sacrificial mound, they eased the litter down,
To music of the kettle-drum, and chanting through the town;

And many gathered round to see the monster where it lay,
And note the froth upon its lip, and living flanks of gray;
And then a maiden, softly singing, passed from door to door,
To leave at each a colored feather from the bunch she bore,
Announcing that the gray-wolf hunters had at last returned,
And each should set his house in order, ere the death-fire burned,
For fear the chief of ceremony, as he wandered near,
Would pass their fire, and leave ill spirits for another year.

Meantime the town had filled with kin, in paint, and gaily
dressed,
Who came to share the ceremony, hoping to be blessed;
For when these rituals arrived, the day and half the night
Were spent in feasting, and in dancing, and in wild delight;
And for the games that here were played these men would
school their strength,
From day to day, and month to month, to lose their wish at
length;
And they would welcome pain and loss, if these would help
them gain
The favor of the gray-wolf day, or leave them free of stain.

The foremost archer of the town was Redbird; he had bent
The truest bow among his kin since first his reed was sent;
And he had held the wampum belt, the emblem of his skill,
And though this day would prove anew, he hoped to hold it still;

For keenest rivalry was up, and twenty bowmen came
To bear away the old reward, or put to test his claim;
So with preliminaries done, below the southern gate,
This company of good contestants had small wish to wait;
Upon the flat the fowler stood, in beaded dress and gay,
His cages and his traps were flush, for this long-looked-for
day;

The archers, by the palisade, were standing in a row,
A crimson plume was in each tuft, and in the hand a bow,
And three deliveries of shafts, in order from the head,
Was now to be the right of each who wore the honored red;
And this renewed, with change of game, and varied length of
shot,

With each to yield the crimson plume, disfranchised in the lot,
With any error of a shaft, or sign of ill accord,
Until the last to keep the red could claim the old reward.

The signal sounded; from the trap a prairie fowl up came,
And Redbird, stepping to the front, struck down his easy
game;

And then, returning to the rank, a second had his will,
And gained his wish so readily it seemed light test of skill.
The trial quickly went around, as did the second flight,
And none as yet had lost a shaft, or forfeited a right;
But now the distance on the flat was twice the former rise,
And on the third delivery five feathers paid the price.

The fowler broke renewing shots, and changed the kind of game;

A pigeon hurtled from the trap to challenge steady aim;
The foremost archer sent a reed that pierced it as it rose,
While passing fortune blessed the rank until the second close;
The distance lengthening again, a single plume had right
To stand beside the old renowned, when closed the final flight.

A cage of swallows now was brought, and Redbird changed
his bow,

Because light reeds and quick retorts were needed in this
throw;

But he was easy in his ways, beneath his past success,
And though alert with eye and ear, he hid his watchfulness.

His only rival, Silverband, was but a youth as yet,
Whose daily thought and nightly dream about this prize had
met;

But straight of limb, and true of hand, and keen of eye
was he,

With silver bracelets worn on arms and buckles at the knee;
And he had practiced many a day, and those who saw him
said:

“This youth will take the gray-wolf belt, when he is given
red.”

But now he chose to keep his bow, and only change his reed,
And fix the tension of the cord to satisfy his need.

The signal came, and Redbird stood upon delivery ground,
A startled swallow darted forth and circled round and round,
And then well up, as if bewildered, hovered in mid air,
The archer, seizing on the favor, struck it hovering there;
A sudden show of scattered plumage floated, soft and white,
And with an aimless throw of wings it closed its upward flight;
Again a swallow clove the air with more than common zest,
And Silverband in silence waited for its snowy vest,
And gaining this, he sent a reed that colored it with red,
At which, beside the fowler's feet, lay severed trunk and head.
Again his rival fixed his shaft to catch the sudden gleam,
The bird was strong and hovered not, but darted toward the
stream;
The slender shaft clove roods of air, and passed above the
bank,
And with no stain upon its barbs within the waters sank;
Ah, Redbird now must yield his plume! and for the purpose
came,
But that was passed in deference to his unequaled name;
And so he stood with folded arms, and marked young Silver-
band,
Who placed his steady reed in rest, and stood with ready hand;
The swallow darted from the trap to skim along the ground,
Then quickly raising on the blue its airy spiral wound,
But took the true and fatal shaft as it was winding there,
Descending lifeless to the earth from troubled fields of air.

And now the youth could claim his wish, but still he drew his
reed,

And waved his hand to signify his wish to give it speed;
He laid his bow upon the earth, and saw the swallow rise
Until it seemed a moving speck upon the burnished skies;
Then coolly struck it floating there, and marked it as it made
A feeble flight to fall within the distant palisade;
And Redbird brought the showy belt, and placed it in his hand,
And plucked his plume to give it too, but gallant Silverband
Returned the plume, but kept the belt, and pressed it to his
heart,

His hope, his aim, his revery, and the reward of art.

This being done, the people gathered at the landing-place,
Beneath the still deserted village, to behold the race;
The light canoes were being manned, and here was strength
and pride,

With chosen shells and tested oars now waiting side by side.
These boats must climb this rapid river to the distant bend,
And, rounding there the lonely rock amid the stream, descend
Beyond the landing and the town, where yonder leaning pine
Is outlined on the rapid flood, in which it must recline.
Above the starting point the river has an even flow,
But angry falls and rocky rapids mark its course below.
The boats, now ready for the signal, waited not in vain,
And every paddle dipped the water with a sudden strain;

The eddies whirled from side to stern upon the river's breast,
As slowly up the even stretch the twenty boatmen pressed;
The lightest shells and strongest arms were foremost in the
race,

Infirmity and common stuff soon found the laggard's place;
The leading boat had reached the rock, the second pressed it
sore,

A sudden mustering of strength, and Redbird parted oar;
Ah, this had given fresh renown; but all is ended now;
And Silverband has passed the rock, and points a downward
prow;

But close behind a dozen oars are crowding on him fast,
Old Brokenbow, the fallen chief, brings round his bark at last.
Down, down, the school of rapid boats sweeps by the eager
crowd,

And dripping paddles glare the sun, and many a heart beats
loud;

The misty falls are just before, but none will dare the leap,
And out beyond the rocky island find a safer sweep;
But Brokenbow holds every eye; he now has placed his boat
Upon the straight and rapid course where none have dared to
float;

'Tis death, 'tis death, to enter there, and take the surge and fall!
He sees the rising mist before, and hears his kinsmen call;
Now out beyond the liquid shelf projects his slender shell,
And for a fearful moment there he hears the far farewell;

Then in the veil, and foam, and yeast, his aged form is lost;
And silence reigns o'er all around, except this depth of frost;
But now a sudden shout arises; he has gained the pine,
Full twenty lengths before the foremost of the vanquished line;
And one by one they reach the shadow of the aged tree,
To watch successors down the rapids dancing merrily.
But where was Redbird? — when he saw decrepit age re-
deemed,

He sought to wash his stain away; anew his paddle gleamed;
He dared the sudden fall of waters, where old Brokenbow
Had lately passed beyond his sight in foamy depth below;
But on the rugged rocks his boat was crumbled like a shell,
And breath was beaten from his body where the waters fell,
But, being rescued by his kinsmen, his was little harm,
Save broken boat, and broken oar, and twice a broken arm.

The day went by with throw of weapon, and with game of
ball,

With test of foot and horsemanship, and feats that might appall;
And then they gathered in the town, to share the final rite —
The burning of the living wolf, as fell the shades of night;—
A priest had passed from door to door, with sudden storm and
shout,

And scourged the evil spirits there, and scattered coals about,
Believing these would find the wolf, and fearing to return,
Would perish at the alter-pile which he would haste to burn.

4. The fire was quickly kindled here, and then a dance begun,
Accompanied by doleful music, till the rite was done;
And then the hour of feasting came, and there was mirth
to-night,
Because the gray-wolf sacrifice had made the future bright;
And so they gave the honor dance, about their foremost chief,
Because the day showed little care, the future little grief.

At this the blue-eyed youth arose, and bid a brief adieu,
And in the darkness and the silence of the night withdrew;
I heard the lullaby of waters by the neighboring steep,
And closed the hingeless door behind me to the realm of sleep.

SEVENTH EVENING.

THE ATTACK.

HOUR of twilight, like a gentle maid
Thou comest to the weary and the lone.
How sweet it is, when day's long course is done,
To find the seat beneath the wild-wood tree,
And feel the southern breezes on the cheek,
And hear, upon the balmy air around,
The drowsy hum of insects, and afar,
The restless herd-bell's voice, and sounds that come,
Subdued and soft, from farm and forest life,
And distant church bells, making holy tones.
Ah, gentle twilight; lullaby of night;
The link of time; the laborer's cooling bath;
Parent of fancy; key of lovers' hearts;
And golden gate into the realm of sleep.

The day had sunken in the deep; a floating fringe of light
Was disappearing from the west, before approaching night;
Within the camp the logs were piled to make a spot of cheer —
A showy rose upon a fabric that is dark and drear;

The voices of the day were hushed, save in the pines a tone
As dole as that in yonder gorge where waters fall on stone;
With listening beside the tent, and reveries of home,
The blue-eyed youth was unobserved, ungreeted he had come;
But now a voice was on the air in his melodious key,
Kind warning that my guest had come to spend the hour with
me;
And so in our accustomed place the curtain of the past
Was lifted, and our eyes beheld the view that proved our last.

Ah, soundly slept the Indian village when the dance was done,
And quickly passed the hours of morning toward the rising
sun;
No guards were set this merry night; no ear received the sound
Of marching troops within the borders of the waste around;
But ere the day was on the hills each band had set its face
Within the wood-embowered line that lay before this place;
The regulars, upon the right, had made a lengthened rank
Along the valley from the wood to reach the river bank;
Upon the left the hardy miners had deployed their band;
The river here, the flat, the bluffs were held in their command;
The lumbermen possessed the center of the arching line,
Well sheltered by the underbrush and trunks of fallen pine.
An officer before his guard now neared the palisade,
Demanding restoration of the captive man and maid,

And the surrender of the raiders — who had wrecked a raft,
And killed a stockman by his ranch, a miner by his shaft —
Receiving from the painted chief the insolent reply
To come and take them if they would, or if they cared to die.

Before the palisaded town a single brave came out,
He bore a quiver at his back, and cast proud looks about;
The silver bands upon his arms were brilliant in the sun,
The gaudy plume upon his head but yesterday was won;
A majesty he had in step, and symmetry in form,
That caught the eye of friend and foe, and checked the bursting storm;

And though a hundred guns were level with his naked breast,
He came as unconcerned as any honored guest.

He paused upon a swell of land, and, though misunderstood,
He made a challenge to the foe, concealed within the wood;

And then he shot an easy arrow, waiting their reply,

And with a skillful hand he took it, coming from the sky;

Three colored reeds in order then to upper air were lent,

And these were caught and given quiver in the order sent;

His challenges were made again, and while his bow was hung
In ease upon his outstretched hand, and with its shadow swung,

A hawk came circling o'er the clearing, from the fields of wood,

At which he sent an easy shaft, that stained itself with blood;

The hawk, upon the shaft impaled, went wildly round and round,

Then, with a sudden loss of strength, fell headlong to the ground;

And while a hundred guns were level with the Indian's breast,
He stood as unconcernedly as any honored guest.

The band of lumbermen, who lay within adjacent wood,

Let wonder wed with admiration for his hardihood;

And ere good Philbrick roused himself, or showed his wish to take

The challenge that this man had made, for his swart kinsmen's sake,

Le Roy beheld it from afar, and from the miner band

Had hastened up the narrow vale, with rifle in his hand;

And now upon an open space, beneath an aged tree,

He stood a good antagonist for any enemy.

The Indian saw him standing there, and seemed well satisfied;

Upon the string he laid a shaft, with feathers brightly dyed,

And slowly raised his mighty bow, as this one raised his gun,

And shaft and bullet clove the air, as if they had been one;

Then missed the lead, and Silverband was standing there unharmed,

He met his foe on neutral ground, and now was unalarmed;

But yonder, 'neath the bending tree, with gun-smoke wreath-
ing white,
Two windows of the day had closed, and brave Le Roy
found night.

A murmur rose from hill and dell, and many an eye was bright
Above a musket that was drawing to a deadly sight;
But none so base as dared to take advantage of a foe
Who faced a hundred men, though near a champion was low;
But Philbrick now was quick to act; emerging by the tree,
He stood beside his fallen friend, before his enemy;
And waved defiance with his hand, and stood with eye intent
On one who dared to meet his ball with reed like this one sent.
But Silverband now changed his shaft, and marked the dis-
tance well,
And when his faultless arrow sped his foeman reeled and fell;
But in his side he took a wound that half a furlong showed,
And though he deigned to heed it not the crimson freely
flowed.

But who is yonder aged man, whose hair is long and white?
He claims the privilege to meet this brave in single fight;
They tell him that his weight of years disqualifies his aim,
And age is scarcely fit for this, and he must yield his claim;
But stern and fixed of purpose he, and since his head has frost,
But little grief can come to any, though his life be lost,

And by his daughter who is captive in this Indian town,
He will not yield the right to strike this boastful savage down;
And so he stood beneath the tree and marked the ready brave,
The wind, the sun, the distance hence, and signals that he gave;
Then each raised weapon to the eye, and deadly missiles sped,
The savage reeled and caught himself, then fell blood-wet and
dead;

But far beyond the leaning tree his shaft had gone astray;
The Pioneer stood firm and tall beneath his crown of gray.

Then rose a sudden din within the neighboring palisade,
A flannel banner floated out, and boisterous bursts were made,
And flint-lock flashed, and rifle spoke, and arrows clove the air,
With mingled yells of pain and hate, defiance and despair;
The regulars upon the right, beneath a wooded hill,
With better arms, and cooler thoughts, had need of utmost
skill;

For steady marksmen were their foes, who fought for home
and kin,

Made bolder by the sight of these, and life-long discipline;
The miners from a lofty bluff flung in a shower of balls,
Upon the thatching of the roofs, and unprotected walls;
An arching stretch of palisade was held in their command,
The distant landing by the river, and the slope of land;
And thrice determined and alert they gave a quick reply,
To every flash or flight of arrow from the stronghold nigh.



FROM THE M., L. S. & W. RY CO.

The fishermen had wooed the neighboring streams.

The lumbermen did little harm before the palisade;
They had a quiet time as yet, but murmurs soon were made,
Because a comrade, for their sake, was lying without breath,
And opportunities were wanting to avenge his death.

The day wore slowly past the noon; the noon approached the
night;

And little vantage-ground was gained by either in the fight;
The miners had withdrawn their force, and passed a mile
below,

To swim their steeds across the stream, then, unobserved by
foe,

To gain the forest opposite the ill-protected town,
Where they could rake the palisade, or strike the fleeing
down.

The flannel banner that had waved defiance all the day,
Was now withdrawn, and white was thrust above the thatch-
roof's gray;

Within the town the firing ceased, and quickly lulled about;
The southern gate was pressed ajar, and many braves came
out,

Who laid their weapons on the earth, and stood with empty
hands,

To signify their wish of favor from besieging bands;
At this the lumbermen sprang forth to occupy the town,
The regulars were slowly coming o'er the low hill's crown,

When suddenly a fearful volley from an unseen foe,
Within the arching palisade, lay half the foremost low;
The few without repassed the gate and disappeared from sight,
Before the staggered enemy recovered from its plight.
The band of miners now had gained the river-bank in rear,
And with a sudden volley swept the inner circle clear;
But still the natives held the houses, and within the walls
They answered the besiegers' shots with well directed balls.

Thus passed the day; but toward the evening heavy winds
arose;

They howled above the wilderness that held the watchful foes;
And now and then the sudden boom of some uprooted pine
Was like a scattered cannon-shot upon a broken line;
The flash of musketry was less with daylight's lessening
rays,

When up the thatching of a roof there swept a sudden blaze,
And then it passed from roof to roof, along the double rank
Of low built houses that were massed upon the river's bank;
And sounds of musketry renewed made answer to the din —
A chant of death by many voices, wild and loud within;
But some now sought the landing-place, and lying in a boat,
Would dare the rapids and the falls — a chance-directed float;
While many, dashing from the town, would find their fate in
flight,

And others asked for mercy from the victors of the fight;

But every miner had a ball for Indian treachery,
And lumbermen that night had favor for no enemy;
The elements that swept the town were not more fierce than
they,
And by the sword and flame this people perished in a day.

Ah, loudly moaned the wilderness around this burning grave,
When through the grated palisade, among the fallen brave,
The foremost of besiegers came, but stealthily and slow,
With watchful eye and ready hand for any lurking foe.
A single figure flitted round among the swarthy dead,
The passing night winds caught but fragments of the speech
he said;

But turning bodies to the light, down would he kneel above,
And press his bloody lips thereon, and whisper words of love:
“Ah, Isadore, my love, my lost — thou art — oh, no; not dead!
For I have found thee now, my love; come, it is time to wed.”
Then peering ’neath the lifeless lids, in eyes as cold as stone,
Up would he start, and, wildly writhing, wring his hands and
moan;

And as he passed from dead to dead, his friends would turn
away,

Or, lingering a moment by, would drop a tear and say:
“This fellow seeks for what, God wot and we, he ne’er shall find;
He loved the maiden that was here, and now has lost his
mind.”

But where was Isadore, the fair, in whose behalf had fought
Full many a true and honest hand, and now was being sought?
When last night's dance and feast were done, and sleep was on
the town,

A boat went softly from the landing, slowly floating down;
It passed the rapids and the flat, and then, with quickened
stroke,

The eddies of a single paddle from its dark sides broke;
The stern was held by Brokenbow; his dumb wife sat before,
And as a day between two nights was lovely Isadore;
The boat bore on its silent freight, now urged by flood and
oar,

The gloomy pines along the banks had many an open door;
And here a patch of solid shade lay dark upon the stream,
And there a stretch of rapid waters showed the pale moon's
beam;

And many a bold and tree-clad bluff bared shoulders to the
light,

Or hid beneath its crown of shadows, and the cloak of night;
And here were coves blocked up with darkness, where the
wild deer drank,

And there were arches filled with moonlight, soft upon the
bank;

But on and on, the silent boat was urged with quickened
stroke,

While eddies from a single paddle from its dark sides broke.

All night, all day, the boat went on; the next had passed its
noon,

Before it reached the shoal of islands in yon long lagoon,
And anchor cast Among the Dells, within this canon's throat,
And waited here the far approach of one pursuing boat;
Within the bow of that light boat the watchful Captain sat,
He held a rifle in his grasp, and seemed to scan the flat;
At easy range he raised his gun, but ere he caught his aim,
Old Brokenbow let loose a shaft that made his wild heart
tame;

He flung his wicked hands on high, but forth his ball had
sped,

Then, losing strength, beside the Dwarf he fell disarmed and
dead;

Old Brokenbow retained his feet until he saw him fall,
And then he yielded up his life before that faultless ball;
And with a sudden throw of spray he fell within the tide,
The water sweeping o'er his breast with shades of red was
dyed;

And while his body floated down, his old and speechless wife
Plunged coolly in, before the Dwarf had skill to take her life —
For he was wild and fierce since now his only earthly friend
Was still and crimson at his feet, with his dark life at end.

Now wildly up the narrow gorge the lonely maiden sped,
The swarthy Dwarf beheld her there, and quit his bloody dead,

And hoarsely shouted in pursuit, but still his worthless feet
But slowly gained upon the fair, by terror made more fleet;
Then up yon rocky stair she climbed, and left the gorge below,
But vainly hoping to elude in this her hateful foe;
She wildly fled along the path beyond this group of pine,
Which since that night has moaned intenser for the maid
divine;
The wicked Dwarf had gained the bluff, and, breathing labored
breath,
Pursued the fleeing, who now sought deliverance in death.

Abruptly paused the story-teller, and his face grew white,
He wildly glared about the camp, and in the gloom of night;
Then shuddering he shrank with fear, and crouched beside my
seat,
And suddenly I heard the sound of heavy falling feet,
And then the wild and long-haired Guard burst in upon the
camp,
He swept his hand across a forehead that was hot and damp;
He bid me quickly follow him, and pointed toward the dark,
But just beyond the wheel of light he paused and seemed to
hark;
Then, peering in the gloomy wood, now checked by pale moon-
light,
I saw a radiant figure there, well outlined in the night;

Transparent as a sheet of mist, and out upon the air,
A floating mockery of substance, was her long loose hair;
She quickly passed beyond my sight, and then a passing shade,
I knew to be the swarthy Dwarf, before mine eyes was made;
The horrid outlines of his form stood out upon the night,
Distinctly as the blackest black upon the whitest white;
And while I gazed the two swept by and in the wood were lost,
The air about me seemed to have a sudden weight of frost;
The youth was standing at my side and shivering with dread,
The aged Guard now bid me come, and through the dark wood
led;

I could but follow, though the thought seemed like an icy bath,
And heeding not the frightened youth, now darted down the
path,

And through the woody slope and dell, where moon-made shadows lay,

With earnest feet I followed on, the old Guard led the way;
And now and then a glimpse was had of that effulgent form,
Close followed by that horrid shade, like sunlight chased by
storm;

At last, emerging where the upland slanted like a roof,
On which the moonlight and the pines had spread a warp and
woof,

Long shelves of rocks projected sheer a hundred dizzy feet,
Above the dark and rapid stream, that passed with sob and
beat;

Upon the right the shoal of islands marked the old lagoon,
Now doubled in the bright reflection of the full orb'd moon;
Upon the left was wooded bluff and narrow river bed,
Through which the waters from the north upon their journey
 sped;

Before, upon a shelf of rocks, above the maddened stream,
The shadowy Dwarf held up the phantom in the pale moon's
 beam;

As if to heave her o'er the cliff he summoned all his might,
She caught his garments as he fell, and both passed out of
 sight.

At this the aged Guard sprang forth upon the shelf of rocks,
And peering in the depth below, the wind played with his locks;
But suddenly the shelf gave way beneath the weight it bore,
And David passed to his account, to meet his Isadore.

I heard the splashing of the waters with the falling stones;
The shadows lay upon the slope, and save the solemn tones
Among the scattered pines about the night wind brought no
 sound;

A painful silence brooded o'er the wilderness around.

I turned, and there beside my feet, beneath the pale moon light,
The blue-eyed youth lay without breath, and as a phantom
 white;

The hat had fallen from his head, and curls had wandered
 down,

Across a snowy cheek and throat—a wealth of silky brown.

A flash of light upon the mind illuminated thought,
And what seemed shadowy and strange, more firmly now was
 caught;
The timid ways, the soft sweet voice, the eyes so shy and mild,
And actions, that had made of youth a coward or a child,
Were all explained; and now arose the purpose to restore
The fair deceiver, ere the breath should pass to come no more.

When wandering within the gorge, a former idle day,
Upon the scarred face of this bluff I marked a rocky way
Where one might pass at fearful need, and risk of life or pain,
To those cool waters far below, and then repass again.
The rocky path was quickly found, and then the hand and foot
Were aided in the steep descent by friendly tree and root;
By narrow shelf, and loosening stone, and many a darkened
 nook,
Which bats were wheeling wildly round, and startled owls for-
 sook,
By fallen trunk, and barren wash, and less distorted slope,
Down, down, to stand at last beside the cool depth of my
 hope.
A boat gave up its bailing can; the water of the brook
Was cool and fresh upon the hand, 'neath which the deep moon
 shook;
Then up and up the dizzy pathway, and I know not how,
I stood in safety there at last, upon the bold bluff's brow;

Then passing up the easy slope, on which the youth was left,
The moonlight flooded all about, of human life bereft;
"Fear not, thou maid! thou needst not fear; come back!" I
wildly cried.

The startled echoes down the stream to this in taunt replied,
The night wind sighed among the pine, and mocked my dying
tone,

I heard the sobbing of the river, but I stood alone.

THE END.

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